

The Old Hymns.

There's lots o' music in 'em, the hymns of long ago;
An' when some gray-haired brother sings the ones I used to know,
I sorter want to take a hand—I think o' days gone by,
"On Jordan's stormy banks I stand, and cast a wistful eye."

There's lots o' music in 'em—those dear, sweet hymns of old,
With visions bright of lands of light and shining streets of gold;
And I hear 'em ringing—singing, where memory dreaming stands
"From Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strands."

They seem to sing forever of holier, sweeter days,
When the lilies of the love of God bloom white in all the ways;
And I want to hear their music from the old-time meetin's rise,
Till "I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies."

We hardly needed singin' books in them old days; we knew
The words, the tunes of every one the dear old hymn book through;
We had no blarin' trumpets then, no organs built for show;
We only sang to praise the Lord, "from whom all blessings flow."

An' so I love the dear old hymns, and when my time shall come—
Before the light has left me and my singin' lips are dumb—
If I can only hear 'em then, I'll pass without a sigh,
"To Canaan's fair and happy land, where my possessions lie!"

—Atlanta Constitution.

John's Other Place.

Yes, he is certainly getting too old for the position, and cannot expect us to keep on paying him for work that he does not do properly, said Mr. Harper, as he sat in the brightly lighted vestry of the church where he was one of the influential members. Of course he has done pretty well all along, but is now slow and old fashioned, and what we want here is a smart, active man.

The object of the above remark was old John McClure, the caretaker of St. Matthew's church for the previous twenty years who had been as faithful in his work as a man could well be.

No one could remember when John had missed one Sabbath from the house of God, and his bent figure and solemn face were as much a part of the church as the very pulpit itself. Needless to say, John was Scotch, and not a man to be trifled with. The care of the church was his work, and he did it; taking his time it is true, but doing everything thoroughly.

He would almost as soon have thought of taking money from the collection box as of leaving any duty undone, so winter and summer his place was never found empty. And now he was to go; or such was the decision of those influential members of the church, whose pews John kept so spotlessly clean, and for whose souls he so conscientiously prayed night and morning by the side of his humble bed in his tiny room.

Not a man dropped to sleep during the sermon for one instant, or failed to respond when the collection plate was passed, but John McClure knew it; and yet he never seemed to let his gaze wander for one instant from the minister's face.

He always sat stiffly in his pew with a hard, set look upon his face, which greatly belied the kind heart beneath his faded coat, and made him the terror of all the offending small boys in the congregation.

No, went on Mr. Harper, we cannot be expected to put up with his slow ways any longer, we want a young man for the position, and old John will have to go.

Very true, brother, answered M. Roberts, the richest member of the congregation, as he complacently rubbed his shapely hands together. John is getting much too old, and though he means well, and all that, he will have to give up. He has been well paid all these years, and should surely have enough laid by now to keep him as long as he lives, or until he finds another place. And Mr. Roberts looked about him with a self-satisfied air as he took from his pocket and consulted a gold time-piece, which probably cost more than the poor old caretaker would earn in a year.

So John's fate was sealed. It was unanimously voted that he should go, and another take his work, and a committee was appointed to wait upon the old man and give him his dismissal. The next morning these men who had the interest of the church so much at heart, as to dismiss the old and infirm caretaker, went to the little cottage where John rented a tiny room, to tell him that they needed him no longer. The loud knock at the weather-beaten door elicited no response at first, but upon being

repeated, the latch was lifted and a thin careworn woman appeared, wiping the soap suds from her hands and clearly showing that she had just left her wash-tub.

Come in, sirs. Come in and set down, she said, as soon as she could overcome her surprise enough to speak. Be there anything I can do for ye?

No, madam, answered the pompous elder, We have come to see John McClure; he has a room here, I believe?

Yes, sir; that's his room across the hall; but I have not seen him about this morning. His month is up to-day, too, and I have been expecting of him in every minute to pay his rent. He always pays up on time, too.

By this time Mrs. Brown had ushered them into the dim room, which old John had called his home for so long, and making another bow to the gentlemen, she hurried back to her tub, for time was money to her and her little ones.

At first the visitors could scarcely distinguish anything in the darkened room, coming in, as they had done, from the bright sun-lit street, but when their eyes grew more accustomed to the place, they could make out several articles of furniture, set neatly about upon a spotlessly clean, but bare, floor. In one corner stood a plain narrow bed, neatly made and covered with some thin quilts. On the bare white table were set a few poor dishes, but nothing more. And seated in an old armchair, his head bowed and his open Bible on the table before him, was John McClure.

He neither moved nor spoke when Mr. Harper addressed him, for the poor old man had spoken his last word upon this earth, and had gone to find his other place without waiting for his notice of dismissal. God in His pity had been more kind than these men to whom the world looked for an example of goodness.

The verdict of death was heart failure, but everyone knew better. The faithful old caretaker had starved to death, and neither food nor money was to be found in his little room.

But the searchers did find something, a crumpled letter, bearing a strange post-mark, the contents of which was:

"John McClure,—Send me at once fifty dollars, or you know the consequence. I need the money more than you do, and if it is not here inside of three days, I shall publish the story of your son's crime. Send to the same address as before.

—Bob."

That was all; and yet was it not enough? This was where John's hard earnings had gone. But who was this son? Surely no one had ever heard of John McClure having a family, in fact, no one had ever had interest enough in the old man to enquire. He had come to the town some twenty years before, and had never made any friends. It was all a mystery, which no one could solve. John McClure was laid for his last sleep in a quiet corner of the little churchyard, with a simply painted little board to mark the spot, and it was not long before he was almost forgotten in the town where he had spent so many years of his life. Almost a year had passed when one bright morning a stranger arriving in the little town enquired for Mr. McClure, and was told as much of his history as was known there.

It was his son, William McClure—the son to shield whom John had given his last penny. The son William, who, years before, in a drunken brawl, had almost taken the life of a companion, and then fled the country. His poor old father, left behind to pay his debts and bear the disgrace had to lose his farm and had, after the death of his wife, drifted to this little western town, where he had, for the last twenty years, lived a solitary and broken life; his one object being to shield his wayward son; his one hope and prayer for the reformation of the boy for whom he suffered so much.

And William, reformed and penitent, had returned. Only to find what? A lonely grave in a strange land, and the loving memory of a kind, but wronged parent, whose prayers had been answered, but too late to give him joy. John McClure's work upon earth was ended. He had gone to his other place, doing his duty here and sure of a welcome above.—The Westminster.

MORAL REFORM AND THE CHURCH.—Every true and timely moral reform should be born and nursed, and reared and supported by the Church of Jesus Christ. There is not a single moral precept which sinful humanity needs but the church should teach it; there is not a wholesome example to be set but the Church should practice it. That Christian church is the most Christ-like which does the most to "seek and to save the lost."—T. L. Caylor

Pleasant People.

Somewhere in a country churchyard, there is a gravestone, on which is inscribed:—She was so pleasant.

It is a eulogy which tells its own story. Whoever it was whose passing is recorded, we may be sure that her departure was truly lamented, and that she was much missed. That is all we know, for who she was, how old, how situated, and the rest of her history is not indicated. Perhaps she was a little child whose winsome ways and merry smile made the sunshine and gladness of her home; perhaps a mother who kept her family in peace and cheered the burden-bearers with the sympathy of love; perhaps even an old woman whose eyes were not so dim but that she could see the needs of others. In any case, she knew how to make the world more easy and fair, and did that which she knew how to do happily and with no self-consciousness.

In the winters of our lives we are all the better if some one who is pleasant shares with us the dark days. What would our world be without those friends of us all who do not claim to be smart or clever, or highly gifted or intellectual, who do not, indeed, claim anything, but are content to be just themselves, cheery, hopeful, kindly and natural? Even the worst people are not proof against them; they can make the very roughest tempers to be sometime amiable and the most hopeless and depressed are cheered by their sunny optimism. The curious influence which we have upon one another is not always taken into account, but we all know how the very atmosphere itself is affected by some people, who perhaps only call upon us for half an hour, but who leave some force behind them which lasts all day.

The house is the better and my room the sweeter because she had stayed in it, we say sometimes, when a friend of gracious personality has visited us.

A lady told me that in the days of her early girlhood, when she went on her way to perform difficult tasks, she frequently met a friend of her family whose face was beaming and whose voice was kind when he spoke to her. There was something in him, she said, which always braced and nerved me for the day.

There are persons who seem to have no faith in pleasant people. They find it impossible themselves to maintain pleasantness of frame or feeling, and they suspect those who are genial and amiable of being insincere. Despair is more natural in them than hope. If they are novelists, they make their stories to end unhappily, and say that this is true to life. If they are preachers, they send us away with failing hearts and disappointed longings. And if they are just ordinary, everyday people, one is very sorry for those who are obliged to live with them. Nobody irritates these captious, quarulous, suspicious people so much as a pleasant person. They do not believe in him in the very least. They say that he is shallow, conceited, frivolous and vain. His pleasantness is but a specious sort of self-seeking, and he only pleases others that he may receive their applause.

I wonder why my neighbour hates me? said one woman of another.

Does she hate you? Surely not, said her friend.

I am afraid she does. She has never a kindly word for me, and my advances are received with a quiet scorn that is hard to bear.

Why make advances, then? Only because I should like to be friendly, and I think she must be lonely.

Yes, she is solitary, envious and miserable, and that is the real reason why she resents any approaches from you, said her friend significantly.

This was an estimate that was only partially correct, for the lady who would not be won was high-minded, if not great-hearted, and she had a strong nature, if not a very kindly one. Eventually circumstances arose which helped to clear away misunderstandings, and when the grave woman and the cheerful one became friends, the friendship was beautiful and lasting.

But those persons who are always smiling and joking are not the pleasant people of the world. When hearts are sad days are dark, there is no healing in the loud laughter of others. The pleasant people we need are quiet, tactful, peaceful, and above all, sympathetic. It is the heart and not the brain that dominates the pleasant person. He has a cheery outlook, a buoyant nature, a brave spirit, because he is good and kind. Be pitiful, be courteous, is an injunction for all of us who wish to be pleasant and fear we are not. Nobody is an agreeable person who cannot forget himself. The heart at leisure from itself is the first qualification. And a resolute look for the bright side of things is another. We are, many of us, far

more depressed and cheerless than we ought to be, for years should teach us gratitude and faith. We wrong others, and we are positively cruel to the young, if our lack of joy should bring the shadow of fear and misgiving upon them. Trouble? Of course, they will have trouble, but if they have also trust it will do them no harm. Care? Yes, but there as One who cares for us, and who invites us to cast burdens upon Him. Let us, therefore, especially while the winter lasts, be as pleasant as it is in us to be. And there is only one way; it is to dwell in the presence of Him who is the light and gladness of the world. Surely He would have us to rejoice and bring His joy into the lives of our brothers and sisters who have more to make them sad than we have, and whose need of cheer is even greater!

—MARIANNE FARNINGHAM

The Reward of Giving.

A little girl whose mother was a sick widow stopped a young man on the street, and begged him to buy her chestnuts. He was poor, but could not withstand her pitiful look. He handed her a coin, and said, I can not use your chestnuts, but you are welcome to this. She thanked him and then hurried away. Twenty years passed. The little girl grew to womanhood and became the wife of a banker. Passing the library one day she saw a man with her husband, whom she recognized as the man who years before had been kind to her. When he had gone she inquired his errand.

He came to see if I would give him a vacant position in the bank.

Will you?

I don't know.

I wish you would, she said, and then told him the story of her poverty and the man's generosity.

The man sat that night beside his sick wife's bed, when a liveried servant brought him a note.

We shall not starve! he exclaimed; I have the position! He opened the note and found inclosed a two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar check, with words, In grateful remembrance of the little silver piece a kind stranger gave the little chestnut-girl twenty years ago.—Ex.

God is Love.

This is the great splendid truth of the Bible, the most glorious fact of the universe. God's essential nature is love: all that is in Him is love; there if nothing in Him that is not love. As gold is gold all the way through, down to its least particle and last atom, so God is love in all His being and there is in Him no slightest element of purpose or power that is not love.

There are different elements or aspects of His nature and character such as thought, feeling, will, truth, justice, retribution, but every one and all of these are but different forms of His love. Love is a state of good will, favor and desire of good-will towards His creatures, and all His thoughts, feelings and energies go out towards them in favor.

When any state or act of His seems to be different from love and even antagonistic to it, such as retribution or wrath, even this is love at its root.—Presbyterian Banner.

The Russian government expects to add 380,000 men to its army this year.

There are no disappointments to those whose wills are buried in the will of God.—Faber.

There are so many cough medicines in the market that it is sometimes difficult to tell which to buy; but if we had a cough, a cold or any affliction of the throat or lungs, we would try Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup. Those who have used it think it far ahead of all other preparations recommended for such complaints. The little folks like it as it is as pleasant as syrup.

With but little care and no trouble the beard and mustache can be kept a uniform brown or black color by using Buckingham's Dye for the Whiskers.

Worms effect a child's health too seriously to neglect. Sometimes they cause convulsions and death. If you suspect them to be present, give Dr. Low's Pleasant Worm Syrup, which destroys the worms without injuring the child. Price 25c.

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MAKE A NOTE OF IT, when you are leaving home to buy "The D. & L." Menthol Plaster. It is guaranteed to cure the worst case of backache, headache, stitches. Avoid everything said to be just as good. Get the genuine made by Davis & Lawrence Co., Ltd.

BUILDING AND TESTING.—When the great Brooklyn bridge was being built, every strand of wire was tested. If it had not been, some time or other that bridge would come down, for bad wire would have been in it. The strands were tested one by one. Thank God, if the storm has come into your life, and some of the single strands that you are putting into your life have been broken, it is better to find it out now than to find it by and by.

London eats 180,000 tons a year of fish—more than half the fish caught by British.

Religion is eternal in the soul of man. Like this ever recurring hunger of the body, there is a soul hunger that seeks through various forms and in all ages for satisfaction.—

Over 2,000,000 miners are required to produce the world's supply of coal. Of this number 603,660 are employed in Great Britain, and 401,320 are employed in the United States.

A WOMAN'S PRAYER.

It is notable that in the despondency caused by womanly diseases, there seems to many a suffering woman no way of escape from pain except at the price of life itself. It would be sad to record such a story of struggle and suffering except for the fact that in such dire distress many a woman has found a way back to health and happiness by the use of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription.

This great remedy for womanly ills has well been called "A god-sent to weak and sick women." It establishes regularity, dries weakening drains, heals inflammation and ulceration and cures female weakness. It makes weak women strong and sick women well.

"Your medicine almost raised me from the dead," writes Mrs. Edwin H. Gardner, of Egypt, Plymouth Co., Mass., Box 14. "My urine was like brick dust, and I had pain all over me and such a dragging feeling it seemed I could not do my house work. I had to sit down to wash the dishes, even. In the year 1897 I was so sick I did not care to live and prayed many times that God would take me. One day I found a little book. I read it and wrote to Dr. Pierce, and in a few days received an answer. I decided to try his medicine, and to-day I am a well woman. I have no backache, no headache, no pain at all. I used always to have headaches previously to the monthly period and such pain that I would roll on the floor in agony. I took three bottles of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription and three of 'Golden Medical Discovery' and three vials of Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets, and was completely cured."

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